

Are We Rich? No. 1.

J. P. MARTIN.

It seems to be a common notion with church people, that the prosperity of a church depends largely on the number of her accessions, and what these do not furnish, is made up by their dollars and cents. If a congregation has a fine house in which to worship and a good choir to sing, and a liberal congregation to procure the most popular preacher, then she is said to be prospering. The world looks upon such as being a model of popular Christianity. True, every member is a good moralist in its modern sense; they do nothing very bad, only attend a first-class entertainment, it may be a party, either surprise or otherwise, a picnic, a ball, the theatre, or a circus; none of these infringe seriously on the rights and privileges of morality. These pleasures are even permitted to infringe upon their religious duties, and no thought of wrong.

Morality is very necessary in a Christian life, but it does not cover half the grounds. I can do unto my brother as he does to me and yet be a moralist; but to do unto him as I would that he should do unto me, requires more than morality enjoins. If my enemy strikes me morality says Strike back; but true piety says, No, pray for him and love him. Morality makes excuses for our shortcomings, but piety shows us their ugliness, and invites us to a throne of mercy. The pleasures of this world are the chief enemies of the child of God. Christ suffered for us; we are to be armed with the same mind. "They that are Christ's have crucified the flesh with the affections and lusts."

Regard for Order.

Nothing conduces more to the comfort and happiness of home than regard for order. The work of to-day, is to a great extent, the repetition of the duties of yesterday, a large portion of which has been brought about by the negligence of the others. Every mother appreciates this as she steps into the deserted apartments of the children early in the day. Sarah's books scattered loosely over the table top, while the shelves show empty spaces, articles belonging to Mary here and there meet the eye of the order-loving head of the home. So with the boys—boots, hats, tops and balls, which to the owner it was but the work of a minute to be placed where each belonged, lie scattered everywhere, making in the aggregate a deal of unnecessary labor for some one else.

Discouraged mother, the remedy for this, is what? Determine not to be the servant of your children; their respect for you will diminish as far as your attitude before them is that of a menial. Many mothers unconsciously slip into this position in their effort to save time, trouble and those little conflicts, so jarring to one's nerves, that invariably ensue when the taste and will of the younger persons are crossed.

If Sarah's books are found out of place, wait for her return home that she, not you, may have the responsibility of putting them where they belong. So with Mary and the boys; throw upon each one the responsibility of order, until it ceases to be a burden. We are all that our habits make us, and what better work can we do for those committed to us than to see that these right habits are formed? A little decision will soon bring this about.

We know of one mother, who, by this plan, has shaken off many of those petty cares that are at times so rasping to the disposition. The question has been frequently asked her, "How do you with so large a family accomplish so much?" It seems to me I am never done." "My children all know what I require of them, and the work seems to work of itself. I am never willing to do for a child what that child is perfectly able to do for itself," is her reply. As a result, in the midst of manifold cares, a fair degree of health and limited means, she is moving quietly alone in the line of self-improvement, fitting herself to take the judicious and intelligent guidance of the boys and girls as they approach their manhood and womanhood.—SEL.

Badges of the Apostles.

The painters of the Middle Ages used to represent the Apostles with special badges which were generally symbolical of some incident in their lives. Andrew was depicted with a cross because he was crucified; Bartholomew with a knife because he was flayed; James the greater with a pilgrim's staff and gourd bottle, because he was the patron saint of pilgrims; James the less with a fuller's pole, because he was slain by Simeon the fuller, with a blow on the head with his pole; John with a cup and a winged serpent flying out of it; in allusion to the tradition that the apostle was challenged by a priest of Diana to drink a cup of poison. John made the sign of the cross on the cup, whereupon Satan, like a dragon, flew from it, and the apostle drank the cup with safety. Judas was represented with a bag, because he bare the bag and "what was put therein;" Jude with a club, because he was killed by that weapon; Matthew with a hatchet, because he was slain by one; Matthias with a battle-axe, because after having been stoned he was beheaded; Paul with a sword, because his head was cut off with one; Peter with a bunch of keys and also with a cock, in reference to the familiar episodes; Philip with a long staff surmounted by a cross, because he died by being hung by the neck to a tall pillar; Simon with a saw, because he was sawn to death; Thomas with a lance, because his body was pierced with a lance.—LITTLE FOLKS.

Give God Your Cares to Keep.

We do not need to bear our own sins, for Christ has borne them on the cross. Nor do we need to bear our own cares, for he is the bearer of our cares as well as of our sins. "He hath borne our griefs, and carried our sorrows."

"If any man sin we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous;" so that we have only to take our sins to him, that they may be forgiven. "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins." In like manner let us go to him with our cares. He is as willing to take them from us as our sins. Let us not keep them to ourselves, nor try to bear them with our own strength.

Why should we insist on bearing our own cares when he is so ready to bear them for us? Why do we magnify them, and multiply them, and brood over them, as if in so doing we could relieve ourselves, or make them seem fewer and lighter? Let us go with them at once to him, knowing that it is as self-righteous to keep our cares as our sins from him. Let us go to him with thanksgiving as well as prayer. Oh how thanksgiving lightens all burdens, and scatters all shadows! How quickly care leaves us when we rebuke it with, "Bless the Lord, O my soul."—DR. H. BONAR.

Stop and Weigh.

One morning an enraged countryman came into Mr. M's store with very angry looks. He left a team in the street, and had a good stick in his hand.

"Mr. M.," said the angry countryman, "I bought a paper of nutmegs here in your store, and when I got home they were more than half walnuts; and that's the young villian that I bought 'em of," pointing to John.

"John," said Mr. M., "did you sell this man walnuts for nutmegs?"

"No, sir," was the ready reply.

"You lie, you young villian!" said the countryman, still more enraged at this assurance.

"Now, look here," said John, "if you had taken the trouble to weigh your nutmegs, you would have found that I put in the walnuts gratis."

"Oh, you gave them to me, did you?"

"Yes, sir. I threw in a handful for the children to crack," said John, laughing at the same time.

"Well, now, if you ain't a young scamp," said the countryman, his features relaxing into a grin, as he saw through the matter.

Much hard talk and bad blood would be saved, if people would stop to weigh things before they blame others.

"Think twice before you speak once," is an excellent motto.

Human Nature.

Human nature is the same in all ages. Circumstances and culture change, but the human heart in this nineteenth century is what it was before the flood. How nearly the sinners of to-day talk, for example, as did the sinners of Jeremiah's time! The latter replied to his prophecies of judgment by saying that God did not speak through him, that "evil shall not come upon us," and that his preaching was like the idle wind (Jer. 5: 11—13). The former in like manner deny the inspiration of the Word which condemns and threatens them with "everlasting destruction"; they sneer at the faithful preacher, claim that his words are merely his own notions, and not the words of the Infinite One. Foolish men! The scorn of Jeremiah's mockers did not prevent the coming of the judgments he proclaimed, neither will the unbelief of modern sinners hinder the execution of that eternal law upon them which declares that "the wages of sin is death!"—Ex.

Golden Gatherings.

Humility is to make a right estimate of one's self.

To argue with an angry man is like preaching to the sea.

Experience is a torch lighted in the ashes of hopes and delusions.

Great hearts alone understand how much glory there is in being good.

According to Solomon, life and death are in the power of the tongue.

A round of pleasure sometimes makes it difficult to make things square.

It is more honorable to acknowledge our faults than to boast of our merits.

A large mass of error is easily embalmed and perpetuated by a little truth.

Graceful manners are the outward form of refinement in the mind and good affections of the heart.

Books that speak through the eye may be the worst of tempters. If books be bad—and sometimes they are especially bad—no tempters can be worse.

They who have never been prosperous can hardly be said to be happy; it is from the remembrance of joys we have lost that the arrows of affliction are pointed.

The improvement of the understanding is for two ends. First, our own increase of knowledge; secondly, to enable us to deliver and make out that knowledge to others.

That we are opposed in our gospel work may be a good sign. It may be the best of all proof that we are doing something to some good purpose, that our power is felt.

Faith and works are as necessary to our spiritual life as Christians, as soul and body are to our natural life as men; for faith is the soul of religion, and works the body.

God dwells far off from us—lost, so to speak, in the bright empyrean. Prayer brings him down amongst us, brings him to our earth, and links his power with our efforts.

Blessed is the man who has found his work, let him ask no other blessedness. Know thy work and do it; and work at it like a Hercules. One monster there is in the world—an idle man.

Let a man have a fervent love for what is pure and just and honorable, let him have a cordial abhorrence of what is sensual, mean, tricky and ungenerous, and he will not go far wrong.

The highest attainable knowledge is that which is rightly chosen, rightly compounded, acquired by right methods, employed to right purposes, and pervaded with the influence of the Spirit of God.

When we feel strongly and mysteriously as to the past, we should remember that all which seems strangest in our consciousness may arise, not from the past which it relates to, but from the present which it subsists in.

Time has a doomsday book, upon whose pages he is constantly recording illustrious names. But as often as a new name is written there, an old one disappears. Only a few stand in illuminated characters, never to be effaced.

Seek not to please the world but your own conscience.